

## LETTEE XVIII

CAMP GOKUN, *July*  
6.

A DESCENT of 5000 feet brought us into the  
grand and  
narrow gorge of the Sahid stream, with  
willow, walnut,  
oak, maple, pear, and crab along its banks,  
knotted together  
by sprays of pink roses, with oaks higher up,  
and above  
them again overhanging mountains of naked  
rock, scorched,  
and radiating heat.

Quite suddenly, after a steep ascent, there  
is a view of  
a steep slope below, where a lateral ravine  
comes down  
on the Sahid, green with crops of wheat  
and barley,  
poplars, willows, and a grove of fine walnuts,  
and more  
wonderful still, with an *wnamssada*, in good  
repair, and a  
village, also named Sahid, in which people  
live all the  
year. The glen is magnificent, and is the  
one spot that  
I have seen in Persia which suggests  
Switzerland.

It is a steep and difficult descent through  
a walnut  
grove to the village, and before I knew it I  
was on the  
roof of a house. The village is built in ten  
steps up the  
steep hillside, the posts which support one  
projecting roof  
resting on the back of the roof below.

The people were timid and suspicious,  
gave untrue  
replies to questions at first, said we were "  
doing talisman  
to take their country," and consulted in  
Aziz's and  
Mirza's hearing how they might rob us. It  
was even

difficult to get them to bring fodder for the horses. They were fanatical and called us *Kafirs*. Some of the women